

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-26 (canceled).

Please add the following new claims:

27. (new): A steering assembly for a bicycle comprising; a non-folding front fork having an upwardly extending steerer tube, a handlebar assembly including a stem slideably mounted inside said steerer tube, headset bearings coaxial with said steerer tube wherein said steerer tube extends above the headset bearings and rotates relative to said headset bearings, said steerer tube being slotted to allow clamping onto said stem.

28. (new): A steering assembly of claim 28 wherein said stem has a longitudinal channel and the steerer tube comprises at least one internal protrusion which fits into said longitudinal channel in the stem and does not allow the stem to rotate.

29. (new): A steering assembly of claim 28 further comprising a hinge on said stem assembly, said hinge located internal to the steerer tube when the steering assembly is positioned for riding, said hinge moveable to a position external to the steerer tube, which, when raised above the top of the steerer tube, allows the stem to rotate axially and then fold down for storage.

30. (new): A steering assembly of claim 30 wherein the hinge is restricted from folding by the extended steerer tube while the vehicle is operated.

31. (new): A steering assembly of claim 28, wherein said stem comprises a plug portion and a top portion coupled to said handlebar, further comprising a bendable cord coupling said plug portion to said top portion, wherein the assembly is attached to a vehicle frame using said bendable cord, and when the stem is raised above the steerer tube, it may fold down for storage.

32. (new): A steering assembly of claim 28 further comprising at least one external protrusion, wherein the stem is equipped with at least one external protrusion which fits into a longitudinal channel in the inner surface of the steerer tube and does not allow the stem to rotate axially.

33. (new): A steering assembly of claim 28 further comprising a threaded upper portion of the steerer tube, a threaded inner surface of the clamping device, and threaded upper headset bearing parts thereby allowing assembly together by threading the upper headset parts and the clamping device onto the steerer tube.

34. (new): A steering assembly of claim 28 further comprising; a longitudinal channel or shape on the inside of the steerer tube, wherein the stem is equipped with at least one external protrusion which fits into said longitudinal channel or shape and does not allow the stem to rotate axially.

35. (new): A steering assembly of claim 28 further comprising a clamping device to permit axial movement between said stem and said steerer tube whereby said steering assembly is adjustable in height in one position of said clamping device and wherein the steerer tube is fixed onto said stem when said clamping device is in a second position.

36. (new): A steering assembly of claim 36 wherein said clamping device is attached to the steerer tube.

37. (new): A steering assembly of claim 36 further comprising clamping means, wherein the steerer tube is fixed to a stem using said clamping means attached to the stem.

38. (new): A steering assembly of claim 36 wherein said clamping device is attached to the steerer tube by means of a threaded member.

39. (new): A steering assembly of claim 36 further comprising at least one internal protrusion associated with said clamping device, said at least one protrusion extending above and past the top rim of the steerer tube into the area occupied by the stem.

40. (new): A steering assembly of claim 36, further comprising means for adjusting said headset bearings using a longitudinal force exerted downward, said means for adjusting being expandable between the clamping device and the headset bearings.

41. (new): A steering assembly of claim 36 further comprising a clamping device which is operated without the use of tools, wherein the steerer tube is fixed to said stem using said manually operated clamping device and whereby said stem is adjustable in height.

42. (new): A steering assembly for a bicycle comprising; a front fork with a steerer tube, a stem assembly for a handlebar, said stem assembly positioned inside said steerer tube, wherein the stem comprises a hinge which is positioned internal to said steerer tube when said steering assembly is fixed for steering and said hinge, when raised above the steerer tube by movement of said stem relative to said steerer tube, allows the stem to rotate axially and then fold down said handlebar for storage.

43. (new): A steering assembly of claim 43, further comprising; a clamping device, having internal protrusions on a portion of said clamping device above the internal hinge, wherein said stem is restrained from exiting the steerer tube by said internal protrusions on the clamping device.

44. (new): A steering assembly of claim 43 further comprising internal protrusions in said steerer tube, wherein the portion of the stem below the hinge is restrained from exiting the steerer tube by means of said internal protrusions in the steerer tube.

45. (new): A steering assembly of claim 43 further comprising a bolt extending vertically from a hand operated locking mechanism at the top and extending downward internally in the stem, and equipped with a hinge located at the junction of a wedge shaped lower piece and its angled lower surface.

46. (new): A steering assembly of claim 45 wherein the folding surface further comprises an inclined quill surface as a rotational face about which the stem can reach the folded position.

47. (new): A steering assembly for a bicycle comprising; a front fork having an upwardly extending hollow rigid steerer tube, a handlebar and a stem supporting said handlebar, said stem coaxially fitted into said steerer tube, wherein the stem and handlebar are vertically moveable to be lifted relative to said steerer tube, said stem rotatable concentrically in the steerer tube to reposition said handlebar, and means on said stem for folding down said stem with said handlebar relative to said steerer tube for storage of said wheeled vehicle.

48. (new): A steering assembly for a bicycle comprising; a handlebar, a stem supporting said handlebar, a steerer tube into which said stem is inserted, wherein the stem and handlebar assembly are moveable to be lifted as a unit, rotated concentrically in the steerer tube and a portion of said stem external to said steerer tube folded down.

49. (new): A bicycle comprising; a frame having a head tube, a rigid steerer tube projecting through said head tube, said steerer tube having a clamping device, a stem mast positioned concentrically inside the steerer tube, headset bearings for said steerer tube mounted on said frame, wherein the steerer tube extends through said head tube and above the headset bearings and is fitted with said clamping device which in turn clamps onto said stem mast.

50. (new): A bicycle comprising;
a frame having a bearing assembly,
a head tube, connected to said frame;
a steerer tube connected between a wheel and passing through the head tube and extending above the bearing assembly;

a quick release binding collar equipped with protrusions extending inward, said quick release connected to the upper portion of the steerer tube above the bearing assembly;

a stem connected between the steerer tube and a vehicle handlebar, the lower portion of said stem being equipped with a hinge which is restricted from being removed from the steerer tube by said quick release protrusions, wherein said stem can be lifted to allow said hinge to be rotated axially, and folded down.

51. (new): A method for folding a bicycle steering assembly comprising the steps of; unlocking a stem, lifting the stem to a position where the upper hinged portion of the stem is above a steerer tube, and rotating said stem on its axis, and folding the stem down for storage.

52. (new): A method for folding a bicycle steering assembly comprising the steps of ; unlocking a stem, lifting the stem to a position where the upper hinged portion of the stem is above a steerer tube, folding the stem down, and rotating said stem on its axis for storage.

53. (new): A method for adjusting the height of the handlebars on a bicycle comprising; a non-folding front fork having an upwardly extending steerer tube, a handlebar assembly including a stem slideably mounted inside said steerer tube, headset bearings coaxial with said steerer tube wherein the steps of; extending said steerer tube above the headset bearings, and rotating said steerer tube relative to said headset bearings, said steerer tube being slotted to allow clamping onto said stem wherein a manually operated lock is released allowing the handlebars to be positioned and then re-locked at the desired height without the use of tools.

54. (new): A steering assembly for a bicycle comprising; a front fork with a steerer tube, a stem assembly for a handlebar, said stem assembly positioned inside said steerer tube, wherein the stem comprises a hinge which is positioned internal to said steerer tube when said steering assembly is fixed for steering and said hinge, when raised above the steerer tube by movement of said stem relative to said steerer tube, allows the stem to fold down and then rotate for storage.

55. (new): A bicycle handlebar stem comprising: a vertical section of the stem which attaches to a bicycle fork steerer tube is comprised of a plug portion and a top portion joined together in a hinged manner.